

Lifestyle + Fashion 16 Oct, 2017

More than just cool: sun protection for children's eyes

Sunglasses can be pretty cool - even on children. However, protecting your child's sensitive eyes is more important than looking cool.

Whether you're vacationing at the beach or relaxing in your garden at home – when the sun is shining, kids love to play outside. Most parents remember to put sunscreen and sunhats on their children, but many do not realise that sunglasses are just as important.
> Children's eyes are particularly sensitive. That is why customised sunglasses from an optician are essential for children when they are outdoors.

There is no holding kids back when the sun is shining. They want to be outside, playing and having fun. Responsible parents put sunscreen on their children and cover their heads to keep the sun off. However, sunglasses should also be worn whenever hats and sunscreen are required. Children's eyes are particularly at risk from the sun's rays. They are clearer and let far more light through than adults' eyes. That means UV rays can do much more damage, as kids have no defense against the short-wave rays from the sun. The risk of permanent damage increases severely if they are exposed to the sun's rays for extended periods. Decades of UV radiation can cause health problems such as cataracts in later life. As a result, sunglasses are far more than just a cool accessory for children.

Like normal glasses, and spectacle lenses in particular, the [quality of sunglasses](#) is particularly important. Fun but cheap glasses generally do not provide the protection required. If the eyeglass lenses contain air bubbles or even streaks, they belong in the toy box, or better yet, in the trash. The same goes for sunglasses with yellow, blue or red lenses, as they distort a child's perception of color. Your local optician can help you choose the right product for your child.

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What do you need to know when buying sunglasses for children?

The glasses frames should not have sharp edges, or be easily breakable - otherwise [your children](#) could hurt themselves while playing. High-quality spectacle lenses are even more important. In the case of both adults and children, wearing sunglasses causes the eyes' pupils to dilate. If the sunglass lenses do not offer appropriate UV protection, dangerous UV rays can pass through unimpeded and cause permanent damage under certain circumstances. Make sure the lenses bear the CE mark and the UV-400 label. Only these spectacle lenses fulfill European requirements. For safety reasons, only shatterproof plastic lenses should be used in children's sunglasses.

Of course, even the best sunglasses are no good if the child doesn't wear them. The biggest problem is that children are not yet able to judge for themselves whether the glasses are a good fit, or whether they are too tight or uncomfortable. You should rely on your optician's experience to help you choose. The experts are sure to find the perfect sunglasses for the shape your child's head.

Tip: To make sure they really wear the sunglasses, let your children help to choose them.

By the way: sunglasses are not suitable for very small babies. Their nose bridges and ears have not yet developed enough to wear glasses. The best protection for babies is a wide-brimmed hat or keeping them in the shade. Children should have suitable sunglasses when they start to attend pre-school at the latest.

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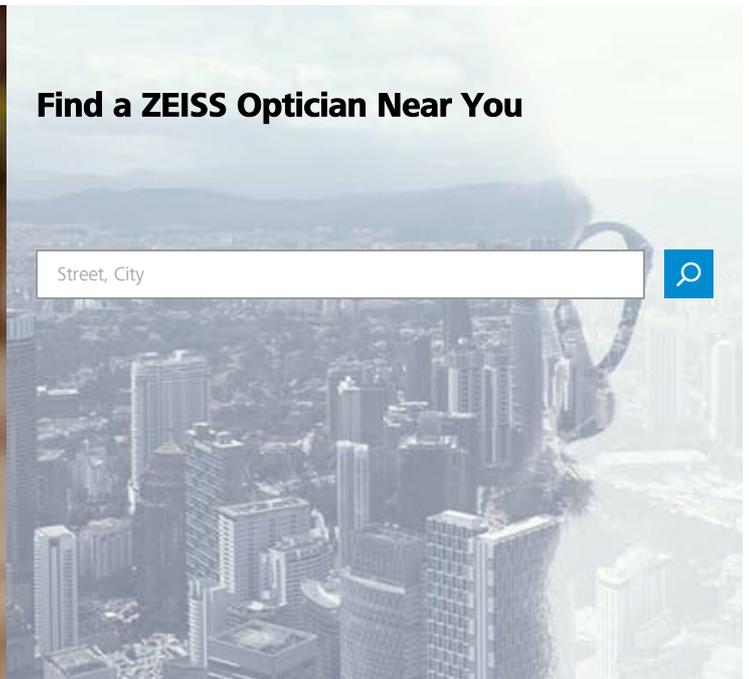
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